

An old man, traveling a lone highway,
Came at the evening, cold and gray,
To a chasm deep and wide;
The old man crossed in the twilight dim:
The sullen stream had no fears for him.
But he turned when safe on the other side
And built a bridge to span the tide.
"Old man," said a fellow pilgrim near,
"You are wasting your strength in building here;
Your journey will end with the ending day,
You never again will pass this way;
You've crossed the chasm deep and wide.
Why build you the bridge at eventide?"
The builder lifted his old gray head.
"Good friend, in the path I've come," he said,
"There followeth after me today
A youth whose feet must pass this way.
This chasm that was as naught to me
To that fair youth may a pitfall be;
He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;
Good friend, I am building the bridge for him."

(22)

TENTH OF MAY CELEBRATION IN GASTON COUNTY

The first cornerstone of a monument is laid in the hearts of a people. By these eloquent and imperishable witnesses we certify to the centuries the things we love and honor. The ideals of a people are discovered through their affections. The thing he loves the best is the measure of the man. It follows that every monument is at once an expression of love and a revelation of character. When we build a monument to the Confederate soldier we consecrate ourselves to the virtues he embodies. Hence it is with legitimate pride that I hail this day when the good County of Gaston leaves factories and fields, and clothed in the beauty of self-forgetfulness and led by these fair priestesses of the brave, makes her offering of love upon the altar of a lost cause and lays the cornerstone of a monument to those mighty spirits of sixty-one and five who had a faith and fought for it and died for it.

Veterans, I come to you today with reverence in my heart, but with feeble phrases upon my lips. I am overwhelmed with a sense of inadequacy that amounts to pain when I contrast the most that I can say with the least that you did. Pitiful is the poverty of language in the presence of battles, wounds, and graves, and all the blood-red drama of war. Powerless is tongue or pen to add to the sublimity of the record you wrote with flame and carved with steel. That record is its own eulogy and its own monument. It declares its own glory.

And yet, while I cannot with words emblazon valor that made the world wonder, I can and do come from your sons and daughters with a message—a message of pride, of admiration, of gratitude, of love. We realize that it is but